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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/527,536	10/03/2005	Ismael Gracia Bobed	2002P01188WOUS	5726

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EXAMINER

CASTELLANO, STEPHEN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3781

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12/15/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/527,536	Applicant(s) BOBED, ISMAEL GRACIA	
	Examiner /Stephen J. Castellano/	Art Unit 3781	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 October 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 12-14, 18-21 and 23-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15-17, 22, 29-30 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12-14, 18-21 and 23-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3-11-5</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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Applicant's election with traverse of Group 1: Fig. 3 in the reply filed on October 10, 2008 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that there is a lack of serious burden. This is not found persuasive because it is the examiner who decides if the burden is serious. In the present case, the burden is serious because the self-tapping screws and a pin provided with hooks would have separate search areas in the fastener art. There would be an additional amount of time needed to search these additional search areas and to evaluate the added art with regard to the claims.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claims 15, 17, 22 and 29-30 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected specie, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on October 10, 2008.

In addition, claim 16 depends from claim 15. Claim 16 would include the non-elected subject matter of claim 15. For this reason, claim 16 is also withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 12-14, 18-21 and 23-28 will be treated according to their merits.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 12-14, 18-21 and 23-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

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Claim 12 is indefinite because the phrase “with additional connecting means” in line 2 is ambiguous because there is no discussion of a first connecting means prior to the introduction of the additional connecting means.

Claim 12 recites the limitation "the plug direction" in line 5. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because the plug direction hasn't been established and this direction could be either the rear or front direction. Also, there is no element which has been labeled, “plug.”

Claim 12 is indefinite because the statement “wherein the pins have an axial through hole which can be penetrated by a rear access with a dowel,” as stated in lines 9-10 is ambiguous because it can't be determined if the rear access refers to an element different from the dowel or if applicant means to claim the Fig. 3 configuration wherein the pin's through hole is penetrated by a dowel from the rear side insertion direction.

Claim 12 recites the limitation "its front end" in line 11. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because the front end of the pin being referred to could be either the insertion direction or the opposite direction.

Claim 12 recites the limitation "the allocated opening" in line 12. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because the term “allocated” had not been used when previously referring to this opening.

Claim 12 recites the limitation "the wall of the pin" in line 12. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because it can't be determined which wall is meant. The pin has many walls, interior walls, exterior walls, walls adjacent to the interior slots,

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a wall adjacent to the entry section 11. For similar reasoning, "the walls of the pin" in line 15 lacks antecedent basis.

Claim 12 recites the limitation "the walls of the opening" in lines 15 and 16. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because it can't be determined which wall or walls are meant.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 12-14, 21, 23, 25-26 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boved (EP 0789104) in view of Bertoldo (EP 0961374).

Boved discloses a container for a washing machine, the container is a lye container insofar as such is admitted by applicant in statements made on the first page of the specification, lines 31-34 with respect to Spanish patent 9600222 which EP 0789104 claims priority to the Spanish patent. The lye container has two halves and connecting means comprising pins (axial projections 7) and openings (cavities 8) at the mouths of their open base sections to produce a fixed connection, the openings are attached in radial extensions, the openings have a front and a rear section. Boved discloses the invention except for the axial through hole in the pin and the dowel that fits within the axial through hole. Bertoldo teaches a junction box having a body and lid, the body and lid have a series of connectors adjacent to the open mouths of the body and lid which include an opening in the body that receives a pin and a pin in the lid, the pin having a through hole that receives a dowel. It would have been obvious to replace the pin and opening of

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Boved with the pin and opening of Bertoldo which pin includes an axial through hole and a dowel to be received within the through hole.

Claims 18 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boved in view of Bertoldo as applied to claims 12 and 23 above, and further in view of Morel (4276806).

The combination discloses the invention except for the insertion stop. Morel teaches an insertion stop for a pin (see Fig. 2-4, the insertion stop is the ledge formed between recess 15 and opening 14), the stop prevents the pin from being backed-out of the opening once the lugs 11 are engaged within the recess 15. It would have been obvious to add the stop to prevent the pin from inadvertently being backed-out of opening to provide a secure connection even when the parts being connected are subjected to vibration and movement the connection will hold fast.

Claims 19 , 20 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boved in view of Bertoldo as applied to claims 12 and 23 above, and further in view of Iguchi (4874276).

Re claims 19 and 27, the combination discloses the invention except for the fixing ribs. Iguchi teaches fixing ribs 13 on a dowel (see Fig. 13 of Iguchi). It would have been obvious to add the fixing ribs to provide a more secure hold for the dowel within the through hole of the pin to prevent the dowel from inadvertently being backed-out of the hole to provide a secure connection even when the parts being connected are subjected to vibration and movement the connection will hold fast.

Re claim 20, the combination discloses the invention except for the entry section of the axial opening of the pin having a diameter larger than that of the dowel. Figures 4-12 of Iguchi

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teach an entry section of larger diameter than the dowel. It would have been obvious to modify the entry section of Bertoldo's pin axial hole to have a larger diameter than the dowel so that it is easier to align the dowel with the axial hole before applying an insertion force to insert the dowel within the pin axial hole.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Stephen J. Castellano/ whose telephone number is 571-272-4535. The examiner can normally be reached on increased flexibility plan (IFP).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony D. Stashick can be reached on 571-272-4561. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Stephen J. Castellano/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3781

sjc